



FRIENDS
of the **FAMILY**
Everyone Has A Home



"This place, it saved my
life and continues to
save my life."

- Paul*
Former Client

2023-2024 **ANNUAL REPORT**



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If you spend any time on social media, watching the news, or reading up on current events, one would think that our nation, our state, and our communities are divided and constantly at odds. The constant barrage of opinions, ads, and talking heads all screaming about one topic or the next! It can be exhausting.

If you really take a moment and look out your window, take a deep breath and look around your community, you will find a different picture. People all over the state are working hard to create a better future for others, walking hand in hand with those in need to create a better today and a stronger tomorrow.

In many cases around the Cedar Valley and beyond, Friends of the Family is leading that charge! The people of FOF are dedicated to creating communities devoid of homelessness, full of hope, brimming with pride in a safe place to live, a purposeful place to work, and a network of support that raises the

quality of life for all of us. This work is intentional, mission-driven, and takes no time to rest.

As a member of the board of directors, I see this dedication, persistence, and love of community on a daily basis. I am inspired by the work being done and motivated to give my time, my money, and my support for a group of people that give so much to our community.

I ask that you join me.

Commit to volunteering, donating, helping, and supporting Friends of the Family. This investment will grow their mission, enhance their work, and allow them to assist more people on their path to independence.

Thank you,

*-Mike Isaacson
Board President*

Making An Impact Through Programming

If there is one thing we know, it's that housing is the only solution to ending homelessness. And at Friends of the Family, getting people housed, permanently, is what we do everyday. You may not know it but we have 9 different programs that those seeking our services may qualify for. Although these programs continue to ebb and flow as funding does the same, we continue to provide opportunities to move people from homeless to housed.

In this past year, we saw the end of a impactful program called the Black Hawk County Housing Project (BHCHP). This program's goal was to work towards ending homelessness through rapid rehousing, case management and financial assistance. BHCHP, over the course of its three years of funding, served 410 households in Black Hawk County. Although this program has ended, we are thankful for its success and for all those in our community who were able to secure permanent housing through it.

In light of one program ending, Friends of the Family has begun work with a new program, Always Home. Although in a different county, Cerro Gordo, this program, like all our others, has the same goal; to get people permanently housed. Always Home is a permanent supportive housing program in which housing assistance and supportive services are provided to assist households with at least one member with a disability in achieving housing stability. This program is being provided in Cerro Gordo county specifically due to the high need and prior to this, a program of this type has not been available to this community. Always Home has already seen success since it first started in January, serving 15 households.

We continue to see success in the programs that are available at Friends of the Family as the number of people supported and funds allocated to clients continues to rise year after year. To learn more about all 9 of the programs available, visit our website at www.fofia.org.



LOW BARRIER/CLIENT STORY



Low Barrier Doesn't Mean Low Impact

When taking a look at Friends of the Family and our shelter, there may be some things you don't know. For instance, we are not a shelter for the general population, we are a crime victim shelter. This means that those supported have experienced some sort of crime such as domestic violence, assault, or trafficking.

We are also what's called "low barrier." Too often we see individuals stay in violent situations because shelters impose "barriers" to gaining access. These could be things such as sobriety, having a pet, no id or even being a certain gender.

At Friends of the Family, having a "low barrier" shelter means that these issues are not a factor in staying with us. It's why Paul* was able to find his way to us and find success through shelter.

Paul was an alcoholic and had been in a violent marriage for 14 years and had made several attempts to leave. He said, "I was laying there rotting away. I had tried to leave before and had left for a few days in a row but never longer." He received a text from his wife one day that said, "I wish you were dead," and he finally decided to leave for good.

After staying in his car for 23 days, he found out about Friends

of the Family. After letting staff know his wife had located him twice after he fled, they knew he needed to leave the area and suggested our shelter.

When he got to shelter, Paul struggled a bit at first but then settled in and started to make progress. He made a 100 day bucket list of things he wanted to accomplish and on that list was get healthy, quit drinking, and quit smoking. He said, "I'm 67 and starting over, you can see how excited I am about living again."

Paul has since come a long way. He has gotten sober, found a community that he loves and finally has a safe and permanent place to call home. When asked what advice he would give to someone in a similar situation, he said, "If someone hurts you or puts you down verbally, give yourself a chance, you deserve it. We are all human beings, don't wait until you're so broken down that you feel unfixable. I thought I was unfixable, but I'm not. I deserve a chance." He then continued to say, "This place, it saved my life and continues to save my life. I got that chance because of this place, because of them (staff). They believe in everybody, they believe in this program. This program is to get you housing, but you're healing too."

*Name has been changed for client confidentiality.

TOP WORKPLACE RECOGNITION

Friends of the Family one of Des Moines Register's 2024 Top Workplaces in Iowa.

Friends of the Family has been recognized as an Iowa Top Workplace, earning a spot on the Des Moines Register's 2024 list. The agency was one of 132 businesses and organizations honored across the state. This distinction reflects the organization's commitment to fostering a positive, inclusive work environment while remaining dedicated to its mission of ending homelessness and supporting survivors of domestic violence.



A staff member shared,

"I make a difference in my community. This job allows me to be who I am and not try to represent myself differently. It challenges me and allows me to grow as an employee."

This sentiment echoes the culture at Friends of the Family, where employees are empowered to thrive both personally and professionally.

Executive Director Ben Brustkern expressed the agency's pride in receiving this recognition.

"We are honored to be recognized as a top workplace in the State of Iowa, and it shows how our employees at Friends of the Family are focused on making the agency a great place to work. The job we do is hard, but each day staff come focused and prepared to meet the challenges we face to end homelessness in our community."

Several staff were able to attend this year's Top Workplace award ceremony where Friends of the Family also received the Meaningfulness award, one of twelve special recognition awards presented at the event. This signifies that Friends of the Family had an exceptional response from staff to the question, "My job makes me feel like I am part of something meaningful."

Friends of the Family's recognition as a top workplace demonstrates the agency's commitment to supporting its staff and creating a strong, mission-driven work environment where we can work everyday towards our vision:
Everyone Has a Home.



"I've always felt giving back to others and the community is one of the most important responsibilities I have. Friends of the Family hits the very heart of my belief system with their strong commitment to eliminating homelessness. Everyone should have a place to call their own. I can't think of a better way to give back to others than to help those who are facing homelessness during some of the most difficult times of their lives. If I can contribute in any small way to a worthwhile cause such as Friends of the Family, I count myself lucky."

- Melissa Haberstich
Board Secretary

SHELTER

5,224 nights of safe shelter; 385 adults, 461 youth served

5,224

HOTLINE

5,119 total calls received

-2,657 housing calls

-2,462 crisis line calls

5,119

HOUSING

491 adults, 416 youth served in housing programs

- averaged 24 days from homeless to housed

- 90.2% successfully exited to permanent housing

90.2%

CLIENT ASSISTANCE

\$2,174,900 spent on direct client assistance

\$2,174,900

STREET OUTREACH

607 individuals served: 416 adults, 191 youth

607

110 NEW donors gave

\$34,175

645 total donors gave

\$254,513

349 volunteers gave

7,831.67

hours to Friends of the Family

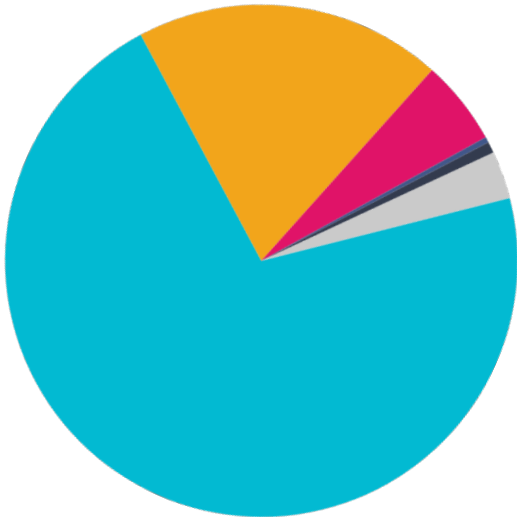
(7/1/23-6/30/24)

A Night In Nashville was the talk of the town, raising over **\$55,000!!** Those in attendance enjoyed some toe tappin' music from Dave Woods and tasty dinner from Blue Barn BBQ. The silent and live auctions were a big hit and we of course love to give away that big trip every year. This event continues to be the biggest of the year and we can't wait to see what the 2024 event brings.

The 4th Annual **Putt an End to Homelessness** presented by Scheels raised over **\$21,000** and was a HUGE success. We had a beautiful day on the course at Prairie Links in Waverly and our presenting sponsor, Scheels, took home the trophy for the second year in a row! Can they make it three years? We will see in 2025!

Chefs Take a Stand presented by The Waverly Exchange Club and Greenstate Credit Union was held at the Hilton Garden Inn, SOLD OUT and raised over **\$36,000!** Best Dish Award winner was Chef Jami from Wartburg College Dining Services for the second year in a row and Best Beverage Award winner, James from Bremer Brewing Company!

Income Overview



- FEDERAL/STATE/COUNTY GRANTS: 71.13%**
- LOCAL GRANTS & FOUNDATIONS: 19.41%**
- EVENTS/CONTRIBUTIONS: 5.37%**
- MISC. INCOME: 0.35%**
- INVESTMENT INCOME: 0.71%**
- UNREALIZED GAIN: 3.00%**

"I've been aware of Friends of the Family since I moved back to the Cedar Valley more than 20 years ago. As the organization has grown and expanded its services, I've been very impressed with the staff and leadership and their commitment to those they serve. When I was asked to join the board, it was very easy to say 'yes' because of the organization's mission and vision. It is an organization I will continue to support both with my time and financial resources for years to come."

-Heidi Solheim
Board Member

"I have supported Friends of the Family for several years through their various fundraisers. Joining the board has taught me more about the important work that they do in providing support for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and homelessness. Their staff and the service that they provide is immeasurable."

-Jeff Conrey
Board Member

Income

Federal/State/County Grants	\$3,469,563
Local Grants & Foundations	\$947,013
Events & Contributions	\$261,951
Misc. Income	\$17,126
Investment Income	\$35,059
Unrealized Gain	\$146,504

TOTAL INCOME \$4,877,216

Expenses

Client Assistance	\$2,176,828
Payroll	\$1,879,147
Employee Benefits	\$136,114
Payroll Taxes	\$149,726
Travel & Training	\$95,544
Contract Services	\$125,097
Rent	\$105,600
Supplies	\$103,950
Repairs & Maintenance	\$30,342
Insurance	\$37,122
Communication/Phone	\$39,411
Utilities	\$28,436
Advertising	\$21,638
Fundraising/Outreach	\$33,504
Depreciation Expenses	\$41,318

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,031,819
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Amount Spent on Client Assistance



FY19-20	\$468,947
FY20-21	\$972,549
FY21-22	\$1,475,765
FY22-23	\$1,976,386
FY23-24	\$2,176,828

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM



Ben Brustkern,
Executive Director/
Visionary



Kelley Schmitz,
Integrator



Will Bird,
Director of Operations



Candi Lanning,
Director of Finance

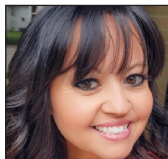


Danielle Vance,
Director of
Development

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mike Isaacson,
Board President



Michele Knaack,
Vice President



Melissa Haberstich,
Secretary



Tyler Mahncke,
Treasurer



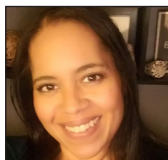
Jeff Conrey



Roshawn Berry



Heidi Solheim



Jazzlyn Douglas



Nate Miller



Friends of the Family works in **25** counties,
employing **37** staff,
at **3** offices,
in **Waterloo,**
Waverly,
and **Mason City.**



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HOTLINES

WAYPOINT CALL CENTER
833-739-0065

24/7 VICTIM SERVICES HOTLINE
319-352-0037

EMAIL
admin@fofia.org

Friends of the Family is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency providing victim services and homeless programming to 25 counties across Northeast and Northcentral Iowa.

Serving the following Iowa counties: Allamakee, Benton, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Grundy, Hancock, Howard, Jones, Kossuth, Linn, Mitchell, Tama, Winnebago, Winneshiek, and Worth.

CONTACT US

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Fax: 319-349-1001

OFFICE LOCATIONS

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Waverly, IA 50677

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Waterloo, IA 50702

PO Box 184
Mason City, IA 50401

